

SENATE RESOLUTION 5

By Norris

A RESOLUTION to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States of America.

WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the United States of America, was born on February 12, 1809, in a log cabin on the banks of Nolin Creek in Hardin County, Kentucky; and

WHEREAS, the son of a frontiersman, Abraham Lincoln grew up in the then-wilderness regions of Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois, where he learned the value of hard work, splitting rails for fences and working on a farm, all while making extraordinary efforts to attain knowledge and an education; and

WHEREAS, in Illinois he worked as a store clerk, educating himself by reading Shakespeare and Robert Burns and learning basic mathematics before serving briefly in the Black Hawk War during 1832. Recognized as a leader by his fellow soldiers, he was elected Captain of his volunteer company; and

WHEREAS, drawn to public service, in 1832 Lincoln unsuccessfully sought election to the Illinois General Assembly, but won a seat in the Illinois House in 1834, as a member of the Whig Party, and served there until 1842; and

WHEREAS, becoming a lawyer in 1836, Abraham Lincoln built a successful law practice in Illinois and courted his future wife, Mary Todd, whom he married on November 4, 1842. The couple would have four sons: Robert Todd Lincoln, Edward Baker Lincoln, William Wallace Lincoln, and Thomas "Tad" Lincoln; and

WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln served one term in the United States House of Representatives, 1847-49, before returning to Illinois to his law practice and his family. His

respite from political life ended with the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, which he opposed, that opened lands previously closed to slavery to the possibility of its spread by local option; and

WHEREAS, viewing the act, sponsored by U.S. Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, as immoral, Lincoln campaigned against Douglas for the Senate seat in 1858, having joined the newly formed Republican party in 1856; and

WHEREAS, expounding on his views during the legendary Lincoln-Douglas debates across Illinois, Abraham Lincoln did not win the election, but gained national fame and prominence that propelled him to the Republican nomination for president in 1860 and the White House; and

WHEREAS, President Abraham Lincoln took office at the onset of our Nation's greatest trial and tribulation, the Civil War, which tore the fabric of the Union, pitting brother against brother. Facing the challenge with extraordinary courage, a love of liberty, and a firm assurance in the divine providence as his guide, Abraham Lincoln remained resolute; and

WHEREAS, hastening the end of slavery, President Lincoln courageously issued the famous Emancipation Proclamation, which valued all people and respected the freedom of all persons regardless of race; and

WHEREAS, cognizant of the tremendous cost of the war on our country, Abraham Lincoln's immortal Gettysburg Address still resounds across the decades to Americans today as it proclaimed government "of the people, by the people, and for the people" as established by our Founding Fathers must be preserved; and

WHEREAS, tragically felled by an assassin's bullet on April 14, 1865, just five days after Lee's surrender to Grant at Appomattox Court House; Abraham Lincoln's legacy of saving the Union and freeing the slaves have led many historians to consider him our greatest President; and

WHEREAS, upon learning of his death, the Thirty-Fourth Tennessee General Assembly proclaimed: "He was, as President, a model. The honors he coveted were honorable. With a wise and lofty patriotism, unsurpassed by any, he applied the powers of his great mind to work out the true principles upon which the Union of the States could be preserved. Abraham

Lincoln's originality of manners, his humor, wit, sarcasm and wondrous powers of ridicule, were weapons particularly his own, which no one else could imitate. Add to these qualities courage, will and indomitable persistency of purpose, which never flagged or faltered, and he was a power felt and acknowledged by the nation. Take him all in all, it will be long ere we look upon his like again"; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of his birth, we honor Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States, paying respectful tribute to his inspirational courage, unsurpassed patriotism, and his steadfast devotion to freedom and liberty for all.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.